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New York

President:	Mr. Aliyev	(Azerbaijan)
Members:	China	Mr. Li Baodong
	Colombia	Ms. Londoño
	France	Mr. Briens
	Germany	Mr. Westerwelle
	Guatemala	Mr. Rosenthal
	India	Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri
	Morocco	Mr. Amrani
	Pakistan	Mr. Tarar
	Portugal	Mr. Cabral
	Russian Federation	Mr. Zmeevsky
	South Africa	Mr. Sangqu
	Togo	Mr. Ohin
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Rice

Agenda

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

Strengthening international cooperation in the implementation of counter-terrorism obligations

Letter dated 1 May 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2012/281)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Expression of thanks to the outgoing President

The President: I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to Her Excellency Ms. Susan Rice, Permanent Representative of the United States, for her service as President of the Security Council for the month of April 2012. I am sure I speak for all members of the Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Rice and her delegation for the great diplomatic skill with which they conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

Strengthening international cooperation in the implementation of counter-terrorism obligations

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The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2012/281, which contains a letter dated 1 May 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan addressed to the Secretary-General, containing a concept paper on the item under consideration.

I wish to welcome the presence at this meeting of the Secretary-General, the Ministers and other participants. Their presence today is an affirmation of the importance of the subject that is to be discussed.

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon.

The Secretary-General: I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan.

I thank the Security Council presidency of Azerbaijan for having convened this timely debate. Next month, the General Assembly will conduct the third review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, adopted six years ago. The issues that we will discuss today can contribute to a good outcome of that review.

Terrorism is a significant threat to peace and security, prosperity and people. The international community continues to pursue a robust and comprehensive response.

Collective efforts have disrupted attacks and disabled terrorist networks. But recent attacks in Afghanistan, Iraq, Nigeria and Yemen have demonstrated that the threat is still formidable. Terrorist organizations continue to look for new havens, adopt new tactics and seek new targets.

Today I would like to make three points.

First, we need to focus special attention on conditions that are conducive to spreading terrorism. In the Sahel region, for example, instability and violence have recently increased, in part as fallout from developments in Libya. The fact-finding mission I sent last December has provided a valuable assessment of the situation in the Sahel and the impact of the crisis in Libya on the region, along with recommendations for mobilizing international support, building capacity and improving coordination among key stakeholders.

Secondly, we must pursue the integrated approach to terrorism and violent extremism embodied in the Global Strategy. That means countering the appeal of terrorism, strengthening capacity-building and protecting human rights as a central part of our response. It means resolving differences peacefully, providing education and job opportunities, promoting development and intercultural dialogue, and addressing the grievances that terrorists exploit.

It also means promoting respect for human rights and respect for the rule of law, which are integral to any sustainable counter-terrorism approach. The Council and the General Assembly both have endorsed this principle. Countering terrorism also means recognizing and alleviating the suffering of victims.

My third point is actually a request. I urge Member States to make full use of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. The bodies created by the Council have played a critical role in the Task Force; these include the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, the Monitoring Team of the 1267 Committee and the expert staff of the 1540 Committee. The Task Force is a valuable tool for

creating an integrated response for capacity-building and for sharing best practices.

In combating terrorism, the international community must also work as one. That is why I hope that Member States will decide to create the position of a United Nations counter-terrorism coordinator to promote better coordination, collaboration and cooperation among all players.

The newly established United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre, within the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force Office, serves a critical role in supporting Member States in all areas under the four pillars of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

I am grateful for the contribution of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the creation of the Counter-Terrorism Centre, and I would like to encourage all participants to contribute to our efforts.

I will be participating in the Advisory Board meeting of the Centre early in June.

By working together in undertakings ranging from strengthening law enforcement to tackling the underlying drivers of extremism, we can greatly reduce this major threat to peace and security.

I wish the Council a productive debate.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

Mr. Westerwelle (Germany): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, and the Republic of Azerbaijan on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of May. Let me also thank you for having convened today's debate on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts.

Over the past decade, the Security Council has shown remarkable resolve in countering terrorism. Significant resolutions have been adopted. Member States have adopted effective countermeasures. Our sanctions regimes have weakened terrorists' resources. As Chair of the Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee, Germany remains committed to working with all Member States to confront the threats posed.

Although we have been successful in disrupting terrorist structures, we must not relent in our efforts. Recent attacks in Afghanistan, Nigeria and Iraq are evidence of terrorists' persistence. Terrorism cannot be associated with a certain ideology, religion or ethnic affiliation. The threat of international terrorism is evolving, and we must adapt our responses to the new patterns.

Consequently, Germany strongly advocates a further strengthening of international cooperation and capacity-building. We thus welcome the most recent report (A/66/762) of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Let me make three points.

First, strategies and measures to counter terrorism must always be based on the respect of human rights and the principles of the rule of law. These are the core values of the United Nations. Our measures need to be effective, but they are self-defeating when they jeopardize the very principles they aim to protect. We cannot protect our values by sacrificing them in the same effort.

Secondly, the sanctions regimes of the United Nations need to be a leading example of fair and transparent procedures. The countering of terrorism and adherence to the rule of law are mutually reinforcing goals. For several years, Germany has been advocating improvements in this area. We attach great importance to the Office of the Ombudsperson which, in the framework of the Al-Qaida sanctions regime, is mandated to receive de-listing requests from individuals. We commend the Ombudsperson, Ms. Kimberley Prost, and the Council for the work done so far. We encourage the Council to continue on this route and to consider options for further enhancing fair and clear procedures when implementing counter-terrorism measures.

Thirdly, the face and methods of international terrorism are changing. The internet is increasingly abused by terrorist groups for incitement and recruitment. In Germany, a terrorist group went unnoticed for many years as it used the Internet to plan vicious attacks and recruit supporters. In response, we need to reduce virtual hiding places for terrorists, and we need to counter incitement. Identifying effective measures while ensuring full respect for fundamental freedoms is a challenge for all of us. We support the pilot projects of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. More needs to be done in

this field. We will succeed only if the whole international community works together.

Let us take advantage of today's debate to send a strong message of our determination. We will counter the threat of international terrorism collectively. We will adapt our instruments to address the evolving nature and the root causes of terrorism. Only enhanced civil liberties, economic prosperity and a chance for political participation can counter the appeal of terrorism in the long run. The basis for all our actions is the rule of law and respect for human rights.

Mr. Ohin (Togo) (*spoke in French*): I should like to begin by wishing you, Sir, a cordial welcome to New York and conveying to you the warm greetings of your counterpart in Togo, President Faure Essozimna Gnassingbé. Your presence at the United Nations today reflects your interest in the issue of counter-terrorism, which remains an ongoing concern and a major challenge to all States. I should therefore like to thank your country, Azerbaijan, for having chosen the theme of today's debate and to congratulate you on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for this month.

I should also like to reiterate our warmest thanks to the United States delegation for its outstanding work in the very busy month of April. Lastly, I thank the Secretary-General not only for his briefing on the issue at hand, but also for the various actions that have been undertaken under United Nations auspices to promote the fight against terrorism.

Terrorism remains one of the greatest threats to the peace and security of peoples and nations. The attacks, abductions, hostage-taking, hijackings of aircraft and killings committed and claimed by terrorists are serious violations of human rights, including the rights to life and to live free from fear. The declared desire of terrorists to acquire weapons of mass destruction heightens the gravity of the threat posed by a scourge to which all continents and countries are exposed.

Terrorists adapt to measures adopted by States to counter them and to that end use new technologies not only as tools for training, recruitment and the financing and planning of attacks, but also as propaganda media to broadcast and justify their actions. These threats have grown increasingly complex and compelled our States to devote significant resources to fighting terrorism at a time when they are already facing many critical challenges linked to the fight against poverty and inequality.

Africa, like the other continents, has known and lived with terrorism. It has paid a heavy price for criminal acts, such as those increasingly perpetrated in Nigeria and the Sahel region by the Islamic sects of Boko Haram, Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb and other criminal groups. The same applies to the terrorist acts being committed in Somalia, Kenya and Tanzania — in a word, everywhere where fundamentalist groups have chosen this way of making themselves heard.

It is important to note that terrorism in Africa is often fuelled by religious fundamentalism and ethnicity. Based on beliefs and dogmas, on the one hand, and on a sense of common ancestry, on the other, it is in every case the violent expression of intransigence and intolerance towards citizens on a continent that is otherwise characterized more markedly than anywhere else by religious and cultural syncretism.

In Africa, terrorist groups increasingly exploit one of the continent's vulnerabilities — its immense State territories, where a lack of control favours the establishment of training camps. Given that reality and the rise in such actions, in the course of its presidency of the Security Council in February Togo drew the international community's attention to the threats that continue to be posed by the transnational organized crime that is clearly linked to terrorism in West Africa and the Sahel region (see S/PV.6717).

We cannot overemphasize that, regardless of the reasons offered by the authors of such acts, there can be no justification for terrorist acts perpetrated against people and public and private property. We must therefore combat the scourge by all legal means.

Aware of the threat looming over our countries, Togo has made counter-terrorism a major priority of its security policy, which is fully aligned with the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Important measures have been taken to strengthen existing legal institutional mechanisms. For instance, on 6 July 2007 we enacted a law against money-laundering, and another on 7 September 2009 against the financing of terrorism, allowing my country to join relevant international conventions. However, the key measure was our establishment on March 2008 of a national cell for the processing of financial information, whose role consists, inter alia, of detecting and halting money-

laundering activities and of coordinating national counter-terrorism mechanisms.

At the subregional level, Togo participates in the legal apparatus adopted by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to coordinate the fight against this scourge. These include the Protocol for the Establishment of a Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, Peace and Security, aimed at strengthening subregional cooperation in several fields, including international terrorism; the Intergovernmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa, which was created in 1999 and whose mandate was revised in 2006 to incorporate counter-terrorism financing; the Conflict Prevention Framework adopted in January 2008 to help the subregion to address the interrelated challenges of cross-border crime, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and political, security and economic governance; and the first Regional Action Plan of 2009 on drug trafficking, organized crime and drug abuse.

These subregional structures, which reflect the commitment of the leaders of West Africa to tackling terrorism, have complemented and strengthened the many legal instruments and mechanisms that the African Union has adopted to facilitate and promote concerted and effective action against terrorism. These measures include the adoption of the 1999 Algiers Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism and its 2004 Protocol Additional, and the establishment of the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism, which form a framework for promoting interaction and cooperation among African States and regional mechanisms.

The fight against terrorism calls for hard work based on, among other things, collective action and intelligence sharing to find and identify the perpetrators of the threat, to pinpoint their locations and to understand their strategies and goals. That work, which requires numerous skills and significant funding, cannot be carried out without cooperation. National initiatives must therefore complement those of other nations and fall within a framework of bilateral, regional and international cooperation and sharing of lessons learned.

Fortunately, the international community has at its disposal many legal mechanisms and instruments for the maintenance of peace and security that can for the most part be used in the fight against terrorism. The adoption of resolutions 1267 (1999), 1373 (2001) and 1540 (2004); the 16 global United Nations conventions to combat specific forms of terrorism around the world; and the 2006 United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy — all of which call for international actions to prevent and punish terrorist acts — speak for the resolute international will to fight terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

Through the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy — on which all counter-terrorism initiatives are founded — the international community has strengthened its capacities in surveillance, cooperation, coordination and harmonization of policies and practices for the prevention and suppression of terrorism.

Today, the greatest challenge for the international community is not to adopt a judicial framework for the fight against terrorism. Rather, it lies in our ability to enact in a coordinated, efficient and effective way the many regional, continental and global instruments already in place. We must demonstrate a greater and unwavering resolve to prevent and combat terrorism, because when it takes root it can strike any and every country.

In that regard, the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565, annex), convened by former Secretary-General Kofi Annan in 2003, states that what threatens the security of any nation threatens the security of all nations, weak or strong. No State, no matter how powerful, can face alone the border-defying threat of terrorism. Cooperation must be our guiding principle in our fight to safeguard domestic and international security. Ongoing cooperation offers the advantages of sharing information about types of terrorist attacks and of finding ways to cut off its funding and weakening its networks. Synergy and information-sharing among the various institutions engaged in the fight, as well as technical and financial aid, are essential in the short and medium terms to eradicating this relentless threat to all nations and all peoples.

The most vulnerable countries, and those with the most limited resources, require capacity-building in surveillance, effective monitoring of the movement of people and goods across their borders, detecting prohibited items, confiscating dangerous materials and depriving terrorists of safe havens.

It is sad to note that one of the assets terrorists enjoy is their networks actively cooperate within one

another, whereas States are often slow to find their way to mutually beneficial cooperation. Togo believes that only joint initiatives at the bilateral, regional and international levels — all the while respecting the principles of independence and territorial integrity — offer hope for an effective fight against terrorism.

Ms. Rice (United States of America): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening and chairing this important meeting, and for focusing our attention on the threat to international peace and security caused by terrorism.

Today's meeting could not be more timely. We meet today one year after the death of Osama bin Laden. His death was an important milestone in the fight against Al-Qaida and other terrorist groups, but it did not remove the scourge of terrorism from our world. The resilience of terrorist networks means that our collective fight against terrorism must continue. Today's meeting underscores the Security Council's unwavering commitment to countering terrorism and reminds us of the work we have left to do.

Though Al-Qaida has experienced major setbacks, its affiliates and other violent extremist groups continue to operate and pose significant threats. Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula has expanded its reach in Yemen and looks to launch attacks abroad. Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) is exploiting and sowing instability in the Sahel, particularly in Mali. Al-Shabaab, which publicly pledged allegiance to Al-Qaida early this year, continues to destabilize the Horn of Africa and deny vital humanitarian relief to those in need.

In Nigeria, elements of Boko Haram have perpetrated widespread attacks, including against United Nations personnel. In New Delhi, Tblisi and elsewhere, we have seen new and recurring acts of violence against diplomats. Terrorist threats continue to emanate from and affect every region of the world. The United States joins others in condemning terrorist acts everywhere they occur.

Terrorist groups continue to evolve and adapt. Some have also become criminal enterprises in their own right. AQIM, for example, has created an environment of fear and instability by adopting kidnapping for ransom to finance its terrorist operations. Kidnapping for ransom is a growing threat to international peace and security and will pose significant challenges to the international community in the years ahead.

To counter the ongoing threat posed by terrorists, President Obama has adopted a strategic, comprehensive approach that combines every tool of American power — civilian, military and economic, together with the power of our values — with the concerted effort of allies, partners and multilateral institutions. Only by addressing the drivers of radicalization, and doing so together, can we prevent local threats from becoming regional and global ones requiring a much more costly response. Therefore we are taking determined action worldwide to stop material support for terrorists, counter violent extremism, reduce recruitment and radicalization, and empower our partners to do so as well.

Last week, the United States chaired a thematic debate in this Chamber on securing borders against illicit trafficking and movement (see S/PV.6760). The Council adopted presidential statement S/PRST/2012/16, requesting the Secretary-General to prepare a comprehensive assessment of the various United Nations structures and activities, and to consider how the United Nations system can respond more effectively to Member States' requests for assistance. The United States seeks to help countries build enduring civilian institutions, underpinned by human rights and the rule of law, which can effectively combat terrorism as well as the drivers of violent extremism. The recently launched Global Counter-Terrorism Forum, aimed at promoting the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, is catalysing those efforts. The United States is committed to strengthening partnerships at the United Nations and other multilateral organizations to combat terrorism. The development of the United Nations counter-terrorism framework over the past decade has been significant. The United Nations has played an important role in building consensus around a global counter-terrorism strategy and delivering technical assistance to bolster civilian counter-terrorism capacities worldwide.

We encourage the United Nations to build upon its valuable contributions, which include the recent establishment of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre within the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. We welcome the Secretary-General's initiative to appoint a United Nations counter-terrorism coordinator and further unify the United Nations

counter-terrorism architecture to ensure that expertise and resources are deployed as efficiently as possible.

Civil society, particularly victims and victims associations, has played a powerful role in counter-terrorism prevention efforts. We encourage relevant parts of the United Nations system, including the Counter-Terrorism Committee and the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, to intensify their engagement with and support for civil society worldwide in the coming years.

The United States strongly supports all of these United Nations efforts and looks forward to continuing to work together in common cause within the Council and the broader international community to prevent and combat terrorism wherever and in whatever form it occurs.

Mr. Armani (Morocco): I would like to express our deep appreciation to the Republic of Azerbaijan for convening this important and timely meeting. The initiative demonstrates the importance that your country attaches to strengthening international cooperation against terrorism.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his statement and commend him for his personal commitment to strengthen United Nations leadership in combating terrorism. The Secretary-General's Symposium on International Counter-Terrorism Cooperation, held in September 2011, produced concrete recommendations that were a welcome development.

We are now looking forward to engaging constructively in the upcoming discussions on new proposals that seek to further enhance coherence and effectiveness of United Nations counter-terrorism efforts, including the establishment of a United Nations counter-terrorism coordinator.

Our debate today is taking place in an international context marked by clear progress in many counter-terrorism fields. We are encouraged by the results achieved so far in many areas. However, terrorist acts continue to occur, and a significant number of terrorist plots are foiled each year in various regions. That provides clear evidence that the terrorist threat persists and our mobilization and cooperation should be sustained in that connection.

Indeed, despite all our efforts, terrorism remains a pressing challenge and one of the most serious threats to international peace and security. The international efforts to combat terrorism are essential, and they must maintain the same determination and commitment. In that regard, the United Nations remains the appropriate and legitimate framework for Member States to adopt multilateral responses to terrorism.

The Security Council, within its mandate of maintaining international peace and security, has taken important steps against terrorism and continues to strengthen the work of its counter-terrorism bodies through a number of additional resolutions.

The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, adopted by the General Assembly in 2006, represents the most comprehensive and effective decision taken by the international community to eliminate that dangerous threat and to improve United Nations action to that end. We are now looking forward to its third review, which will provide an additional opportunity to consider an improved and more effective translation of its four pillars into concrete actions and measures.

The role of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force in implementing the Strategy must be further strengthened. The United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre was established during the current session of the General Assembly, thanks to initial funding from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and it constitutes an important mechanism allowing the Task Force to further develop its capacity-building activities and enhance international coordination in the field of counter-terrorism.

The establishment of the Centre in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia provides an important tool, and we are committed to working together with the King of Saudi Arabia and other members of the Centre's Advisory Board to achieve its important objectives.

Morocco fully shares the resolute determination of the international community to stand firm and united in the fight against terrorism. On that basis, Morocco has established a comprehensive and multidimensional counter-terrorism approach that converges with the United Nations strategy and complies with the Charter of the United Nations, as well as with other relevant United Nations resolutions and international legal instruments to which Morocco is party.

The proactive Moroccan approach was successfully translated into firm and preventive law-

enforcement measures, as well as national initiatives aimed at addressing the numerous social, economic and cultural factors that are at the root of violent and extremist ideologies.

Our approach is based on a number of factors. The total rejection of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations by all Moroccan citizens has been of vital importance. Morocco's long-standing commitment to the values of tolerance and peaceful coexistence has remained strong and has also played a key role within our society. Above all, it is Morocco's firm determination to pursue its irreversible democratic path — paved with genuine reforms with human development as the driving force — which has provided the best protection against the spread of extremist and violent ideologies.

Yet no matter how successful, actions pursued by individual States cannot manage to face alone the scope, diversity and continuous sophistication of the terrorist threat. Despite all our efforts, terrorism remains a real cross-border threat that can strike any region and any nation, regardless of its religion, culture or level of development. For that reason, nothing can replace an effective and coordinated international commitment to cooperate against terrorism.

Morocco has consistently expressed its deep concern with regard to the spread of terrorist activities in the neighbouring subregions, namely West Africa and the Sahel region, but also in the Gulf of Guinea and in the Horn of Africa. Our continent has in recent years witnessed an increase not only in the frequency but also in the degree of sophistication of violent acts committed by terrorist networks, often striking in areas already faced with many difficulties and socio-economic problems, especially environmental and food security challenges, and unresolved conflicts. Thus, these terrorist activities have dramatically increased the number of innocent victims, undermined the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and threatened regional stability as a whole.

Recent developments have also confirmed that there is an established interconnection between terrorist groups, separatist movements and criminal networks involved in arms, drugs and human trafficking, as well as piracy and kidnapping activities. This interconnection has allowed terrorist networks to tap into the financial resources arising from illicit cross border flows, and consequently to enhance their operational capabilities and even expand their control, in some instances, over territories of sovereign States.

The Council has repeatedly expressed its concern and condemnation of the presence of and attacks perpetrated by terrorist groups in these regions. Today, there is an urgent need to establish a sustainable framework for dialogue, cooperation and solidarity that encompasses all States concerned with the security and stability in the region in order to address in a holistic manner the political, security and human development dimensions of the region. Priority should also be given to development. Narrow political calculations must give way to shared responsibility and constructive partnership, particularly in the case of West Africa and the Sahel. Without partnership and shared responsibility, we cannot move forward.

Consistent with its long-standing commitment to peace and security in Africa, Morocco has been an active partner in assisting other African countries in enhancing their individual and collective capacities to face terrorist groups, as well as the numerous transnational organized crime networks with which they are affiliated. In this regard, the Conference of Justice Ministers of Francophone African Countries for the implementation of universal instruments against terrorism and the Ministerial Conference of African-Atlantic States represent key initiatives to which Morocco actively contributes. Morocco will also host the second edition of the Regional Ministerial Conference on Border Security, following the first meeting held in Tripoli last March, which comprises a number of States of North Africa and the Sahel region.

In line with this commitment, Morocco will spare no effort in continuing to support all initiatives aiming at building genuine partnership and mutual confidence conducive to effective regional and international cooperation. Within these parameters, we are equally committed to contributing to the activities of the Global Counter-terrorism Forum in a manner that complements and reinforces existing multilateral counter-terrorism efforts, in particular those conducted by the United Nations.

In conclusion, we are deeply convinced that the United Nations should remain the universal framework to reinforce our clear and strong message that the international community stands united in expressing our rejection of all violent ideologies and in working together to promote dialogue among our civilizations

and to prevent the stigmatization and indiscriminate targeting of particular religious groups in the ongoing fight against terrorism.

Mr. Zmeevsky (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): At the outset, I should like to thank you, Sir, and the Azerbaijani presidency for your initiative to convene this high-level meeting of the Security Council on the very urgent theme of strengthening international cooperation in combating the global threat of terrorism.

Terrorism knows no borders. On the eve of this meeting, we have received reports of terrorist acts in the Russian Federation and Nigeria, as a result of which once again dozens of innocent people have suffered. We offer our condolences to the victims and their family members, and our solidarity with them.

Terrorism has no justification, no matter how you seek to embellish it. It is a universal plague that should be condemned and recognized everywhere as a criminally punishable act, while those who participate in terrorist acts must be recognized as criminals and receive their just punishment. That unshirkable responsibility is a fundamental principle of international cooperation in effectively combating terrorism, enshrined in the basic United Nations counter-terrorism conventions.

The Russian Federation views today's meeting as yet another development in the strengthening the central coordinated role of the United Nations in our systemic counter-terrorism work. Over the past few years, we have established under United Nations leadership a broad infrastructure of global cooperation in this area that incorporates dozens of international organizations and regional associations. We have significantly strengthened the international legal basis for combating terrorism, and active work continues towards the establishment and promotion of norms and standards in this field. The new level cooperation among law enforcement agencies has allowed us significantly to damage terrorist infrastructure and to shut down many of its financing channels.

Unfortunately, not only has the terrorist threat not abated, but it has recently acquired a new dimension and gravity. Against the backdrop of highly inconsistent and incomplete processes in North Africa, the Middle East and the Horn of Africa, we have seen a notable escalation of terrorist threats and a more regional focus on the part of Al-Qaida and related groups. Terrorist partnerships with criminal groups have grown stronger, with aim of establishing cross-border criminal channels for the drug trade, illegal migration, human trafficking and weapons smuggling. It has become clear that this will lead not only to a substantial strengthening of terrorist cells, but also to a dangerously broad transmission of a new ideology that intensifies violence and extremism and exacerbates interreligious and interethnic conflict. There is also still real potential for growth in the terrorist threat in the Afghanistan/Pakistan region, thanks to the stimulus provided by the illegal trade in opiates.

In such conditions, we are increasingly dependent on the implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy adopted by the General Assembly, which has flexibly combined traditional methods of law enforcement and prevention and has attacked the socio-economic roots of terrorism, and in so doing has strengthened the legal framework and observance of human rights.

The Security Council now faces the challenge of responding in a timely and appropriate manner to the shifting challenges of terrorism. Our response must be strengthened by effective and comprehensive steps to ensure the implementation by Member States of the Council's decisions, develop a dialogue among them, and provide them with the necessary assistance. We believe that serious attention should be focused on the following areas.

First, we must do out utmost to strengthen the legal basis of counter-terrorism, broaden the circle of participants in counter-terrorist conventions, and ensure the strict implementation of all their undertakings and their nationalization through legislation. One urgent priorities is the conclusion under United Nations auspices of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

Secondly, we must undertake counter-terrorist cooperation on a pre-emptive basis, focusing on the prevention of terrorism. In the context of the theme of today's meeting, the greatest threat posed to international peace and security is that posed by terrorism based on mass destruction. Steps to prevent nuclear terrorism are extremely critical in that regard. It is necessary to ensure the greater participation of States in the core conventions of the United Nations and the International Atomic Energy Agency in a global initiative to combat acts of nuclear terrorism and

compliance with the decisions of the Seoul Nuclear Security Summit. In meeting those challenges, the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) must play an important role.

To deprive terrorists of social support, we must make additional efforts that include an economic factor, through law enforcement bodies. Such contributions to job creation could be carried out not only by States, but by United Nations counter-terrorism bodies, such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), together with organizations that are specialized in economic assistance, including the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the Economic Commission for Europe; and regional associations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

Such synergy would turn a new page in the efforts of the international donor community, through combining development assistance with efforts to counter-terrorism and fight criminals. No less important are the continued efforts to halt the financial flows that fuel terrorism, including those resulting from the participation by heads of narco businesses and other types of organized crime in such activities.

A remaining issue of great urgency found in resolution 1624 (2005), is the challenge to counter the ideology of terrorism and establish an atmosphere within the international community conducive to its total rejection. The struggle for the hearts and minds of people must be carried out through strengthened intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding among civilizations and religions and by firmly curbing incitement to terrorism in all its aspects.

We must establish effective cooperation with civil society in order to neutralize at the earliest stages any manifestation of violent extremism or terrorism. The prohibition of any form of assistance to terrorists, including military, technical and financial is an international imperative. States that ignore that obligation will see their actions backfire in the end, at the cost of lives of their own civilians.

Effectively countering terrorism is impossible without strengthening the potential of the forces to fight it. The continued assistance of international agencies to interested States is important in developing and improving counter-terrorism legislation and training staff. Crucial support to counter-terrorism efforts results from skilled analyses of the phenomenon, including its strengthening ties with organized crime, narco-trafficking and piracy, as well as newly developing trends such as individualized terrorism or self-radicalization.

We need to strengthen the scientific analytical capability of the relevant United Nations agencies by providing them with a more practical orientation. A successful such example is the UNODC's survey on terrorism.

Thirdly, it is extremely important to develop a consolidated response to new terrorist challenges, including in cyberspace. Practical actions to implement the Security Council requirement on closing down terrorism propaganda websites, for example the Caucasus Centre website of the terrorist organization known as the Caucasus Emirate, must be supplemented by developing a global treaty to counter the use of cyberspace for terrorism and other criminal purposes.

Adopting reliable international criteria is crucial in defending tourists from terrorists and other criminal assaults. Motivation for that has been provided by the recently concluded Vienna session of the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. We look forward to the involvement of many States and leading agencies of the United Nations, regional organizations and the business community.

As part of the public-private partnership, another project is being drawn up by the UNODC and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute to cut off the flows of precious metals into the hands of terrorists and other criminals.

A partnership with business is useful also for developing effective measures to ensure the rights of the victims of terrorism, including compensatory payments based on transnational systems for insurance and reinsurance relating to mega-terrorist acts.

Fourthly, we must not overlook improving the work and the working methods of the United Nations counter-terrorism bodies. We must continue to strengthen the capability of the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), which monitors implementation by Member States of the

basic text on counter-terrorism activities, namely, resolution 1373 (2001).

The Russian Federation supports the work of the CTC in improving assessment mechanisms, preparing a global review on the implementation of resolution 1373 (2001) and resolution 1624 (2005), broadening the international counter-terrorism agenda by countering the incitement of terrorist acts and strengthening dialogue among civilizations.

The continuing practice of country visits by the CTC remains one of the key instruments of monitoring the achievements and prospective work of States to strengthen national anti-terrorism capabilities and to analyse best practices. The Russian Federation is planning to host a visit of the CTED in October.

We need further steps in order to improve the effectiveness and capacities of the Council's sanctions regime against Al-Qaida and the Taliban. As a result of the reform in June 2011, we have been able to ensure greater transparency and adopt procedures with greater flexibility with respect to de-listing, which should not weaken the capabilities of the counter-terrorism regime, which could in turn cause some States to depart from compliance with their sanctions obligations.

Given the increased activity by regional terrorist groups of Al-Qaida, especially in North Africa, and their broadening ties with other criminal organizations, measures are necessary to spread the counter-terrorism sanctions regime to new individuals and entities.

The urgent challenges include the full implementation of resolution 2017 (2011), adopted on the initiative of the Russian Federation to counter the uncontrolled spread of Libyan weapons. The Russian delegation has, on many occasions, drawn the Council's attention to that significant threat, possibly including man-portable air defence systems and other dangerous weapons falling into the hands of terrorists. The paths of those weapons have turned from veins into arteries joining terrorist groups with criminal organizations and separatist movements and thus strengthening their destructive capacities.

The most vigorous measures are necessary in order to implement resolution 2017 (2011) with the support of the Sahel Saharan States and further work in various international forums, including the Rome-Lyon Group of Eight and the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum.

Fifthly, the United Nations deserves great credit for the increased level of cooperation at the regional level through the establishment of feedback mechanisms in cooperation with operational counter-terrorist agencies. We highly appreciate the efforts in the fight against terrorism of the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the NATO-Russia Council, the Organization of American States, the Latin American Reserve Fund, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and others. Together we will work with partners to increase our contribution to counter-terrorism efforts under the aegis of the CSTO, SCO and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

We welcome the presidential statement to be adopted at the end of today's meeting. It is aimed at developing counter-terrorism cooperation under the auspices of the United Nations. The Russian Federation vigorously condemns terrorism in all its aspects and will continue to contribute to that work through strengthening international cooperation based on trust and strict adherence to the principles of international law.

Ms. Londoño (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, and your country, Azerbaijan, which I had the privilege of visiting a few months ago. I would like to congratulate you for presiding over the Security Council and convening this important debate on a subject of important relevance worldwide. I would also like to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his statement on the issue.

Terrorism is a threat to international peace and security. It affects society as a whole, including the rule of law and the enjoyment of human rights. The human costs of terrorism are felt throughout the world. Therefore, the international community must address that many-faceted threat through coordinated action aimed at all levels and aspects of terrorism.

Over the course of decades, the international community has developed a body of law that includes 14 international treaties and four modifying protocols that address specific aspects and acts of terrorism. In addition, the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council provide a comprehensive framework that addresses terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

Although we have not agreed on a definition of terrorism, we have made progress in identifying the key elements of acts that the international community considers to be terroristic and condemns as unjustifiable in any circumstances, be they of a political, ideological, racial, religious or any other nature.

Terrorism and other threats to international peace and security have several phases, dimensions and complexities that we must address through international consensus and cooperation, as highlighted in the concept note prepared by the Azerbaijani delegation (S/2012/281, annex). Since this is a phenomenon with global implications, the United Nations and especially the General Assembly, as its universal organ, should be the focal point for discussing policy agreements and cooperation. In turn, the Security Council, operating within own purview, has adopted measures that contribute to and complement international action against terrorism.

There are other forums for dialogue and the identification of best practices that should work closely with the United Nations. Among them, the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum has identified specific areas of cooperation and best practices that have great value to all States in their fight against terrorism.

Among the various existing mechanisms that address the threat in a coordinated way, I stress the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy as an effective tool for preventing, punishing and eradicating the scourge of terrorism. While recognizing capacity-building as an essential element of global action against terrorism, the Strategy is dedicated to adopting decisive measures to enhance coordination and coherence within the United Nations system in order to promote international cooperation in the fight against terrorism.

In that context, the development and strengthening of national legislation and the consolidation of mechanisms for cooperation and capacity-building are crucial complements to the Global Strategy. The Organization should take further steps to provide technical assistance in order to facilitate the strengthening of national capacities.

States should guarantee that the counter-terrorism measures they adopt comply with all their obligations under international law and in particular with human rights. That includes the adoption of measures to protect the rights of victims and compensation for their suffering, which should be seen as a crucial aspect of the fight against terrorism. In that regard, we note the emphasis accorded to human rights in resolutions 1624 (2005) and 1963 (2010).

Terrorism does not exist in isolation from transnational organized crime. There are networks whose funds derive in large measure from the activities of organized crime, including drug trafficking, illicit arms trafficking, illegal mining, extortion, kidnapping or piracy.

By its very nature, the financing of terrorist acts is a matter on which the international community should take more effective measures. In order to prevent terrorist networks from accumulating the financial and logistical resources necessary to operate, we need to develop comprehensive measures that incorporate elements of the legal instruments that address transnational organized crime. Funding derived from various crimes creates new scenarios that require States to join forces in order to design comprehensive strategies to address both the problem and its solution.

My country believes that the adoption, implementation and promotion of cooperation frameworks offer an effective response to terrorism. Colombia is an active participant in new and varied mechanisms of regional and multilateral cooperation. In addition to the United Nations, the Organization of American States and the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum, we have worked with countries of Central America, the Caribbean and, more recently, Africa to share experiences and build capacities to combat transnational crimes that are linked in one way or another to terrorism.

We believe that the international community has an obligation to continue its head-on struggle against terrorism.

Mr. Li Baodong (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I congratulate Azerbaijan on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of May. I appreciate Azerbaijan's initiative in convening this high-level briefing on counter-terrorism. I welcome President Aliyev's leadership of today's meeting.

This year marks the twentieth anniversary of Azerbaijan's accession to United Nations membership. Azerbaijan is also serving as a non-permanent member of the Security Council this year. Over the past 20

years, Azerbaijan has made tremendous efforts and scored tremendous achievements in national development, and it is playing an increasingly important role in United Nations affairs. It has contributed positively to the realization of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. China would like to express its warm appreciation. I also welcome today's briefing by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

Terrorism is a common threat to the international community. China condemns terrorism and resolutely supports efforts to combat it in all its forms and manifestations. The international community has made tremendous efforts in combating terrorism, but terrorism is far from having been eradicated. It still seriously threatens international peace and security and it has evolved in form and means. With regard to strengthening international counter-terrorism cooperation, I would like to stress four points.

First, Member States should uphold unified standards on the issue of counter-terrorism. Terrorist acts, regardless of their motives, wherever and by whomever they are committed, should be unequivocally opposed and addressed with firm measures. Double standards must be rejected in the effort to combat terrorism. The international community should oppose any form of incitation to or support for terrorism. Adopting inconsistent positions on the basis of one's own interest will serve only to shield or connive with terrorism, defeating the purpose of counter-terrorism and undermining international cooperation in that regard.

Secondly, we must address both the symptoms and the root causes of terrorism through integrated measures. Terrorism emanates from a complicated set of political, economic and social factors. Measures to combat it should focus on promoting development, eliminating polarization and social injustice, and appropriately resolving regional conflicts. Terrorism is often accompanied by the spread of separatism, extremism, violent hatred and intolerance. It should therefore be addressed in a holistic manner. Relying solely on military means may very well prove to be counter-productive.

Thirdly, to strengthen international cooperation on counter-terrorism, the United Nations and the Security Council should play a leading role. In the effort to combat terrorism, we must abide by the United Nations Charter and the basic norms of international law and respect the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States. China supports the full and effective implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, as well as relevant Security Council resolutions and presidential statements. Coordination among various United Nations counter-terrorism bodies should also be strengthened. Counter-terrorism assistance to Member States should be based on respect for the will and choices of those States. China welcomes the establishment of the United Nations Centre for Counter-Terrorism and hopes that it will provide important assistance to Member States in terms of capacity-building and technical assistance.

Fourthly, counter-terrorism efforts must be based on dialogue among civilizations and on the promotion of mutual understanding and tolerance. International cooperation on counter-terrorism should serve to promote dialogue and exchange among various civilizations, religions and ethnicities, as well as mutual respect and harmonious coexistence. We must not draw ideological lines in our counter-terrorism efforts, and we oppose linking terrorism with certain States, Governments, ethnicities or religions. We also oppose shielding or conniving with terrorism on the basis of any political, ethnic or religious pretexts.

China is the victim of terrorism and is facing various terrorist threats, primarily from elements of the East Turkistan Islamic Movement at home and abroad, as well as from other international terrorist groups and individuals. China is ready to participate actively in cooperation on counter-terrorism within the framework of the United Nations, and we will work untiringly to that end.

Mr. Tarar (Pakistan): We would like to extend a warm welcome to you, Mr. President. Your presence in presiding over this meeting testifies to your strong commitment to the work of the Security Council and the importance that we collectively attach to strengthening international cooperation on counter-terrorism. Let me therefore congratulate you and the delegation of Azerbaijan on your initiative of holding this meeting and on your sterling stewardship of the Council. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

No country has suffered as much from terrorism as Pakistan. Pakistan unequivocally condemns

terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, whoever commits it and wherever and against whomever it is committed. We also condemn the killing of civilians anywhere in the world, whether through terrorist activity or the use of unlawful or disproportionate force. All efforts to combat terrorism must respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and comply fully with international law. All of us also agree that terrorism and extremism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, race, ethnicity, faith, value system, culture or society. No religious tradition or doctrine encourages or inspires acts of terrorism.

Pakistan reaffirms its commitment to strengthen mutual cooperation in the fight against terrorism. Coherence and coordination are necessary to the international community to succeed in its fight against terrorism. Towards that end, Pakistan supports a comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy and its balanced implementation. The international community must address the root causes of terrorism, which include prolonged, unresolved conflicts, aggression, foreign occupation, denial of the right of peoples living under foreign occupation to self-determination, social and economic injustice, and political marginalization and alienation. Continuing to remain in denial about the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism will only be to our collective detriment. It is necessary to eschew policies that alienate people and make them vulnerable to extremism; it also necessary to tackle unemployment and promote economic and social development, particularly in regions challenged by extremism.

Pakistan fully supports the observance of legal principles in implementing counter-terrorism resolutions. We support reform of the procedures of the counter-terrorism-related committees of the Security Council in order to ensure due process. We welcome the recent efforts the Council has made in this regard through its appointment of an Ombudsperson to the Committee established pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) concerning Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities, and expect that the process of reform will continue in order to further improve procedures.

The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy has broadened the scope of counter-terrorism to include the larger endeavour of countering extremism through intercultural dialogue. It would help implementation of the Strategy if there were greater commitment to addressing the problem of defamation of certain religions, as well as to combating intolerance, negative stereotyping and discrimination based on religion or belief. In this increasingly globalized world, more than ever before we need better understanding, harmony and bridge-building among all cultures and peoples.

The United Nations has a special role to play in promoting international cooperation in the field of counter-terrorism. The Organization and its counter-terrorism bodies need coherent policies and better inter-agency coordination. We note that the Secretary-General, in his latest report on the activities of the United Nations system in implementing the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (A/66/762), has recommended that Member States consider appointing a United Nations counter-terrorism coordinator. We are ready and willing to analyse that recommendation in the framework of the General Assembly during the forthcoming review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. While we support the institutional coherence of the United Nations, we also emphasize the importance of respecting the mandates of the Organization's various organs, as outlined in the Charter.

We appreciate the positive contribution of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) in improving the coordination of United Nations activities in the field of counter-terrorism. We hope that the United Nations Centre for Counter-Terrorism, established through an initiative of Saudi Arabia, will help the CTITF enhance its coordination efforts.

The promotion of international cooperation in the field of counter-terrorism is indeed a noble goal. Pakistan fulfils its international obligations, particularly its commitment to implementing the various counter-terrorism conventions, with great responsibility. We have ratified 10 of 13 United Nations conventions relating to terrorism, and are also a signatory to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, adopted in 2000. Pakistan is party to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, and has enacted a landmark anti-money-laundering bill. A financial monitoring unit has been established in the State Bank of Pakistan to monitor suspicious financial transactions. Sixty-four bank accounts valued at 750 million Pakistani rupees have recently been frozen.

The international community has acknowledged Pakistan's role and sacrifice in the struggle against terrorism — a problem that has grown in intensity over the years due to the decades-long conflict and instability in Afghanistan. We need continued cooperation and support for our counter-terrorism efforts. Pakistan has deployed 160,000 troops on its border with Afghanistan and set up 822 border posts to interdict Al-Qaida and Taliban members. The international community has an obligation to remain committed to helping Afghanistan restore durable peace and stability.

To conclude, countering terrorism is a collective responsibility that should be discharged in a spirit of cooperation, understanding and an unwavering sense of our common humanity.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): I congratulate Azerbaijan on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of May. I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his briefing and you, Mr. President, for convening and presiding over today's meeting. Your presence here sends an important signal regarding the priority your country attaches to United Nations counter-terrorism efforts. It is a priority that the United Kingdom shares.

The United Nations is at the forefront of the work to counter terrorism across the globe. We applaud those efforts, and the commitment to tackling terrorism shown by the United Nations and its Member States. Terrorism is a global phenomenon and requires a global response, which the United Nations is uniquely placed to lead. We welcome ongoing efforts to build on the legal framework for countering terrorism, addressing the conditions that can give rise to violent extremism and taking practical measures to prevent terrorist attacks.

I want to make two main points in today's debate. First, sanctions are a key instrument in the response of the United Nations to international terrorism, and the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), and the Committee established pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) concerning Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities, is fundamental to that. The United Kingdom welcomes the further improvements adopted to ensure that the procedures in the Al-Qaida sanctions regime continue to be fair and clear. The Al-Qaida sanctions Ombudsperson plays a particularly important role in that regard, and I take this opportunity to reiterate the United Kingdom's full support for the Office of the Ombudsperson. At the same time, sanctions must be implemented effectively and robustly. We therefore welcome all initiatives to reinforce Member States' capacity to that end.

Secondly, I want to highlight the importance of coordination — what the Secretary-General earlier called "working as one". There are a large number of international bodies involved in the global counter-terrorism effort. With such a level of activity, effective coordination is key.

Resources are necessarily limited, and we must make certain that we are getting the most out of all our good work. The Secretary-General's call for a counter-terrorism coordinator provides an excellent opportunity to shape the United Nations response to terrorism. It is an important step forward that the United Kingdom strongly supports. We must ensure that that position has the right mandate to bring cohesion and coherence to the United Nations counter-terrorism work. We need to think carefully how best to manage the resources in order to achieve that result.

In addition, we must maintain focus in our efforts. To that end, we welcome the review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. We hope that the themes covered in the review will help guide the strategic direction of the United Nations in its counter-terrorism efforts. I would like to take this opportunity to extend our thanks to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for its contribution towards establishing the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre.

The United Nations has a unique and vital role in countering terrorism. Let me affirm that the United Kingdom will continue to work closely with all partners to ensure that the United Nations is properly equipped to deliver.

Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri (India): At the outset, allow me to extend to you, Mr. President, a very warm welcome to the Security Council. Your presence in the Council is indeed a defining moment as Azerbaijan assumes the presidency of the Security Council for the first time in its history. I would also like to express our deep appreciation to you, Sir, and to your delegation for organizing today's meeting on this important subject of threats to peace and security caused by terrorist acts, and for chairing the meeting.

I would also like to acknowledge the participation of ministers and high officials of Germany, Togo, Colombia, Morocco and the Russian Federation in today's meeting. Their participation and valuable statements underscore the importance of the subject for the international community. Our thanks are also due to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive and insightful briefing.

Today, terrorism constitutes the most serious challenge to international peace and security. Over the years, the visible landscape of international terrorism has changed vastly. In our globalized world, terrorists are also globalized in their reach and activities and are able to wage asymmetric warfare against the international community. Terrorists have established linkages with transnational organized crime, and their veritable nexus with drug, human and arms trafficking is now well established. Terrorist financing, illicit money-laundering, drug trafficking and the illicit arms trade remain intertwined in a complex web of toxic relationships.

There is also a growing risk of weapons of mass destruction of different kinds falling into the hands of terrorists, which will only exacerbate the existing grave security challenge to the international community. In today's Internet-based age, there is also increasing misuse of cyberspace and related technologies by terrorists and their supporters for the purposes of recruitment and training and the financing, planning, preparation and incitement of their activities.

An effective counter-terrorism strategy therefore requires greater international and regional cooperation than the international community has so far been able to achieve. International cooperation and concerted action against terrorists and their sponsors, including the complete dismantling of terrorist safe havens, sanctuaries, training grounds and financial and ideological support structures, are the critical imperatives to defeat the scourge.

My own country, India, has faced the scourge of terrorism for several decades. Indeed, our entire region, South Asia, has been wracked by the activities of the biggest terrorist actors in the world, be they Al-Qaida, Lashkar-e-Toiba, Jamaat-ud-Dawa, elements of the Taliban or others. Terrorism, extremism and radicalization continue to pose a serious challenge to peace, progress and prosperity in the region.

India condemns all acts, methods and practices of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, irrespective of the motivation that may be invoked to justify them. We have been at the forefront of global counter-terrorism efforts. India is part of the major global initiatives against international terrorism, including the Financial Action Task Force. We fully support all efforts that strengthen international and regional cooperation and that, most important, help to ensure the effective implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions, including 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005), and a comprehensive and integrated implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

We also endorse the two consensus benchmarks that are reflected in the outcome document adopted on 28 September 2011 by the special meeting of the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee, which has been chaired by India since January 2011. The outcome document (S/2011/689, annex) is a major landmark in providing a strategic direction to the work of the Committee aimed at strengthening the capacity of States in their counter-terrorism efforts. It raises the benchmark in the fight against terrorism to a higher level, and urges all Member States to ensure zero tolerance towards terrorism and to take urgent action to prevent and combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations through the full and effective implementation of resolution 1373 (2001) and other relevant international instruments. We urge all United Nations Member States to strive to implement that approach in their counter-terrorism efforts.

We believe that terrorism cannot be countered by law enforcement means alone. Prevention is also critical. Effective responses will necessarily include other aspects of legal and social policy, among which some of the key components are development, education, social integration, tolerance, the rule of law and respect for human rights. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (General Assembly resolution 60/288) is a wholesome document that incorporates various aspects in its four pillars and provides guidance to Member States in implementing a global strategy in a balanced and integrated manner.

Despite the various daunting challenges in the fight against terrorism, significant progress has been made over the past decade by strengthening cooperation, enhancing solidarity and facilitating dialogue among Member States in their efforts to

counter the terrorist threat. The United Nations has played a seminal role in the capacity-building of Member States. States need assistance to fulfil their obligations under the United Nations anti-terrorism conventions to which they are a party, as well as the Security Council counter-terrorism and other relevant resolutions. We commend the efforts and commitment of the relevant United Nations agencies, including the Security Council's subsidiary bodies, in developing the capacities of countries in that regard.

While the Security Council has remained steadfast in its fight against international terrorism, it must further enhance the level of international cooperation to counter the threat decisively. We encourage the subsidiary bodies of the Council with counter-terrorism mandates to continue to enhance their ongoing dialogue with Member States, donors and beneficiaries on the facilitation of technical assistance for capacity-building at the national, subregional and regional levels. We also welcome the recent initiative of the Secretary-General for Member States to consider the creation of a United Nations counter-terrorism coordinator, and express our willingness to fully engage in all deliberations aimed at further improving the cross-institutional coherence and effectiveness of United Nations counter-terrorism efforts.

India has long held the belief that the United Nations also needs to strengthen its counter-terrorism normative framework through the adoption of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. I can only echo the call of the Secretary-General that the time has come for such a convention to be adopted.

Mr. Sangqu (South Africa): Your personal presence here today, President Aliyev, is an expression of the importance your nation attaches to the global fight against the scourge of terrorism. My delegation welcomes you to the Council today and thanks you for presiding over this meeting. We also wish to acknowledge the presence of the various high-level delegations around the table today. We also thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

Terrorism remains a perennial threat to the world, and we believe it is apt for the Council continually to reassess the wide array of counter-terrorism measures at its disposal. South Africa condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. The killing of innocent civilians is never acceptable. We are firmly committed to addressing the threat posed by international terrorism through multilateral forums and in accordance with human rights, international law and the United Nations Charter.

The United Nations has a pivotal role to play in coordinating international efforts to fight the deadly scourge of terrorism. It is important that Member States pool their resources in combating terrorism globally, and the multilateral system should be strengthened to deal with those efforts. We should also avoid the temptation to create parallel structures outside of the United Nations, which results in duplication, competition and the depletion of limited resources that could have been used to reinforce United Nations counter-terrorism global strategies.

South Africa is of the view that terrorism cannot be defeated militarily or unilaterally. There is an urgent need to focus on the deep-seated root causes of terrorism and to develop collaborative strategies to tackle the challenges of terrorism. In that regard, concerted and sustained efforts must be reinforced in order to resolve terrorism-related conflicts in all parts of the globe.

We are concerned about the uncontrolled spread of arms and ammunition in the Sahel region, emanating from the Libyan conflict. That is directly related to the increase in terrorism activities and transnational organized crime in the Sahel and West African regions, which present a threat to peace and security and undermine efforts made thus far towards achieving democracy, peace and stability. The global campaign against terrorism should also include a worldwide joint commitment to eradicating poverty and socio-economic underdevelopment. Countermeasures can never be sustainable if those factors are not addressed in relation to counter-terrorism initiatives.

The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy remains a useful and flexible collective platform for guiding the international community's response to terrorism. It provides a holistic and multifaceted response to the challenge that is premised on respect for human rights and the rule of law. The Strategy recognizes that it is important to address conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism not only in their own right, but also as part of an effective anti-terrorism strategy. Furthermore, the strategy builds on the international consensus that terrorism cannot be ascribed to any particular religion or culture.

South Africa is convinced that international efforts to support counter-terrorism initiatives have a better chance of success if they also focus on regional cooperation and coordination. It is up to all countries and subregions to contextualize the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and to make it meaningful for themselves as they address the diverse range of local actors required for its successful implementation. A one-size-fits-all approach would not work.

In that regard, we acknowledge the joint initiatives of the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate and the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force designed to strengthen regional cooperation in the implementation of the Strategy, and their close cooperation with the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and the Counter-Terrorism Committee. We also appreciate the technical assistance and cooperation that are offered to those countries and regional organizations that need to address challenges related to terrorism.

There should be greater interaction and cooperation between the General Assembly and the Security Council in order to ensure that actions taken by the different structures in countering terrorism are complementary, and not competitive or duplicative. South Africa has taken note of the review of the existing United Nations structures to combat terrorism and the recent announcement made by the Secretary-General regarding the appointment of a counter-terrorism coordinator. In creating such an office, it is important that the mandate and scope of the coordinator be clarified, as should be the relationship between the coordinator and existing United Nations structures dealing with terrorism, each of which has its own specific mandate. My delegation is of the view that the creation of any new office should be measured against its contribution to facilitating international efforts to combat terrorism rather than duplicating existing structures or placing additional burdens on Member States, especially those from the developing world.

Building on existing international solidarity and cooperation is the key to progress in addressing the scourge of terrorism. It is therefore important that we continue our efforts to finalize the comprehensive convention on international terrorism by reaching agreement on a definition of terrorism. We encourage delegations to participate in activities aimed at finalizing the draft convention, including discussions on submitting a draft resolution.

As stressed in the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, respect for human rights is an essential element of our counter-terrorism efforts. It is not possible to claim the moral high ground while abusing basic human rights and compromising laws in the interests of political expediency. We cannot remain silent where rights are ignored and individuals are subjected to unlawful detention, torture and assassination. The Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism should be supported.

Security Council sanctions have to be capable of withstanding legal scrutiny, including on the question of due process. We therefore welcome efforts to create fair and transparent procedures to be used in listing and de-listing processes. Similarly, the Office of the Ombudsperson, with the support of the members of the Security Council, is playing a significant role in strengthening the legitimacy and credibility of the work of the sanctions committees.

In conclusion, we wish to emphasize that the United Nations counter-terrorism agenda should place a particular focus on the deep-seated socio-economic and political disparities that are the breeding ground for the spread of the terrorism in different parts of the world. We also want to express our support for the presidential statement to be adopted at the end of today's meeting.

Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, we thank you for having taken the initiative, through your Permanent Mission to the United Nations, of organizing today's meeting and for doing us the honour of presiding over it personally. We also express our gratitude for the concept note that you have prepared (S/2012/281, annex), which will no doubt guide today's debate. We also thank the Secretary-General for his presence and for the information that he has presented.

The Government of Guatemala categorically rejects all acts of terrorism and reiterates its commitment to preventing and combating the scourge. It is discouraging to find that terrorism in its different expressions and locations continues to spread and even to gain in intensity. The number of events and victims is on the rise, at least in some parts of the world, leaving a tragic trail of dead and wounded who are almost always innocent men, women and children. The

methods used are becoming increasingly grotesque, and no one, not even United Nations personnel and representatives of humanitarian institutions, escapes the risk of experiencing a terrorist act.

Nor does the phenomenon recognize borders, which is why international cooperation is critical in addressing it. In that regard, we acknowledge the important progress achieved in the fight against terrorism, but evidence shows that we can and must do much more.

Consistent with our repudiation of terrorism, we have to date ratified 12 universal instruments currently in force and the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism. In addition, we have a law against the financing of terrorism, and we have established a presidential commission against money-laundering and the financing of terrorism. We are currently in the process of incorporating into our national legislation those acts of terrorism listed in the universal conventions, and we have prepared a draft law against international terrorism, which is currently under consideration in the appropriate congressional committees.

We are well aware that all States, in all regions — be they large or small, strong or weak — are vulnerable to terrorism and its consequences. Any discussion of this important issue should therefore focus not just on the threat to one country in particular but on a concerted response by all countries.

Mr. President, in your concept note you have submitted for discussion various ways of strengthening international cooperation for the implementation of measures to combat terrorism. In that respect, we would like to make the following remarks.

First, we would like to see a stronger emphasis on measures to prevent terrorism. We believe that we should avoid focusing all of our attention on ex post facto measures, particularly sanctions. In that regard, we believe that conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism — its root causes — represent a key element of the preventive measures that should be considered on a priority basis.

Secondly, one of the many lessons learned over the past 15 years is that it is not possible to combat terrorism exclusively though military force. Although terrorism is a criminal and unjustifiable act, all measures to combat it must conform strictly to international law, in particular international norms for the protection of human rights and international humanitarian law. The legitimacy of the actions undertaken by the United Nations and its Member States is of crucial importance.

Thirdly, in making international cooperation a fundamental pillar of the global effort to eliminate terrorism, it is important to take two dimensions into account: cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, and cooperation within the United Nations system. With respect to the latter, this year the General Assembly will undertake the third review of the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. That exercise will also contribute to strengthening the capacity of the Security Council as a key actor within the system. Concerning the first aspect, we await with interest the consideration of additional measures aimed at strengthening the coordination, coherence, efficiency and transparency of the Organization, with a view to adequately responding to the needs and specific circumstances of States and to optimizing relations with regional and subregional organizations.

Fourthly, we believe that is necessary to adopt, as soon as possible, a general convention on terrorism, especially given the multidimensional character of this phenomenon. We believe that the value added of a general convention that would supplement existing instruments to combat international terrorism would include the following elements.

A general convention could contribute to preventing impunity for those who commit acts of terrorism, which is at this time one of the major threats to international peace and security. It would facilitate cooperation and mutual legal assistance among States so as to bring the perpetrators to justice. It would provide a definition of terrorism, allowing for the universal classification of such despicable acts. It would also bridge existing gaps in the work of the Security Council, in particular with respect to the 1373 (2001) Committee and the measures taken by the sanctions committees.

Fifthly, we express our solidarity with the victims of terrorism and their survivors. We welcome the trend towards the humanization of victims of terrorism.

Finally, my delegation fully supports the proposed presidential statement that will be adopted at the end of this meeting.

Mr. Briens (France) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on Azerbaijan's assumption of the presidency of the Council and to thank you for having convened this debate on counter-terrorism. It is imperative that the Council remain actively seized of the matter.

As the Secretary-General emphasized in his statement, more than 10 years after the events of 11 September 2001, terrorism remains a grave threat to international peace and security, and we must continue to work relentlessly to combat it. This issue, which was one of our priorities during our 2011 presidency of the Group of Eight, is particularly important to France, which was recently affected by that scourge on its own territory.

The terrorist threat, which is more present than ever, has evolved; specifically, it is becoming more regional. Many local-level groups are affiliated with Al-Qaida or pursue their own objectives. Those amorphous groupings are having an impact on the security and socio-economic development of entire regions, in the Sahel — today in particular — Yemen, the Horn of Africa, Central Asia or South Asia.

The Sahel region is very much affected, as the events of the past few weeks have made clear, with the occupation of cities in northern Mali by terrorist groups and those who support them. We note that those groups, wherever they are to be found, take advantage of the historical weaknesses of the States targeted and exploit them in order to create sanctuaries, which can then be used as rear bases for operations aimed at neighbouring States.

We cannot stand by idly in the face of the threat of the expansion of regional hotbeds of violent radicalization. To meet that challenge, the international community must work together and give pride of place to the implementation of national, regional and international strategies. Such strategies must deal with the issue comprehensively. Thus the elimination of conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism requires the implementation not only of security policies but also of development and good-governance programmes. That can be done by, for example, putting in place regional strategies. That is the approach taken by the European Union, whose Sahel strategy has both a security track and a development track.

I believe that two components of counter-terrorism strategies are particularly important: capacity-building and the promotion of the rule of law, because they provide States under threat with a long-term approach. As we all know, when State authorities lack resources, that fact is often exploited by terrorists. Such States, threatened by the activities of terrorist groups on their territory, must have at their disposal the means necessary to dismantle networks and foil attacks. They must also begin to cooperate politically and operationally, especially at the regional level.

However, it is also vital that they have the means and the technical assistance necessary to allow them to prosecute, try and convict terrorists while complying with human rights. France participates in these global efforts, for instance by lending its support to the establishment of judicial counter-terrorism centres in Mauritania and Niger and offering training for judges.

France attaches great importance to counter-terrorism efforts at the United Nations, the role of which is irreplaceable and indispensable. The United Nations has allowed us to establish a sound international framework to combat terrorism. I am thinking in particular of the relevant resolutions of the Council, beginning with resolution 1373 (2001), the many relevant United Nations conventions and protocols and in the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the creation of which we supported in 2006 when it was established by the General Assembly. This series of texts reflects the current international consensus on counter-terrorism.

Establishing norms is not enough, of course. We need to strengthen specific actions against terrorism. To that end, a number of projects and initiatives are being undertaken under United Nations auspices, such as the activities of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime on the ground, the technical assistance programme of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, and the new United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre. I welcome the quality of work done by the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, which analyses and assesses the situation of States, facilitates the establishment of technical assistance programmes, and works to strengthen regional cooperation by States in combating terrorism.

As we approach the biennial review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, to be held in the next few weeks, it is essential to continue working to improve the institutional architecture of the United Nations bodies tasked with fighting terrorism. On this point, we

support the proposal of the Secretary-General regarding the appointment of a United Nations counter-terrorism coordinator. It is indeed vital to improve international coordination, particularly through the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, which offers the appropriate framework.

That improved coordination should be done on two levels. First, it should be undertaken within the United Nations in order to avoid duplicated initiatives and to allow for synergies. Secondly, however, there should also be coordination with outside institutions, such as the European Union or the Global Forum, and with other organizations that have counter-terrorism competencies, such as INTERPOL. That is how we will ensure both the coherence of international action and the clarity of the work of the United Nations in this area.

Mr. Cabral (Portugal): I thank you very much, Mr. President, for convening this timely meeting and for honouring us with your presence in chairing it. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his introductory statement.

International terrorism continues to pose enormous challenges to the international community, requiring increasingly coordinated efforts to ensure that it is effectively prevented and countered. The presidential statement that we are going to adopt rightly calls for enhanced coordination among all relevant actors, including improvements in the cooperative work done within the United Nations system, on the one hand, and among international, regional and subregional organizations, including civil society and the media, on the other. I would like to highlight some aspects in this context that, in our view, deserve particular attention.

First, I note the need to encourage and assist States in developing comprehensive and integrated counter-terrorism strategies. Those strategies must be devoted not only to law enforcement and reactive approaches, but also to addressing conditions conducive to radicalization and recruitment for terrorist purposes. The strategies therefore must include consistent preventive efforts and measures of a structural and cross-cutting nature. Moreover, where such preventive approaches are concerned, we attach great importance to the promotion of a universal culture of mutual understanding and tolerance among different cultures, religions and communities. In this regard, we would like to underline the influential role being played by the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, with its national and regional strategies aimed at creating and nurturing a culture of inclusion and tolerance for diversity.

Secondly, we very much value the attention given to strengthening multilateral and bilateral technical assistance programmes, offered upon request to the States and regions that are most affected by terrorism. The dimensions and seriousness of the challenges posed to those States and regions by terrorism and terrorist acts require, in our view, more consistent provision of international assistance in the form deemed most appropriate and effective. To that end, by advancing regional solutions that are better tailored to realities on the ground and better designed to respond to similar challenges and to build on common strengths and capacities, regional approaches often seem to be the most effective framework.

Thirdly, we share the concerns expressed over the increasing connection, in some areas of the world, between terrorism groups and transnational organized crime networks, including those involved in illicit arms and drug trafficking, piracy and robbery at sea, money-laundering and the trafficking of human beings.

Last but not least, we would like to reiterate the particular importance of ensuring that counter-terrorism measures fully comply with obligations under international law, in particular international human rights, refugee and humanitarian law. Respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law is also, in our view, a very effective tool for fighting radicalization and countering the narratives and appeals put forth by terrorist groups.

In this regard, and specifically referring to the sanctions regime pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) on terrorism, we are pleased to express our appreciation for the remarkable improvements brought by the Office of the Ombudsperson with regard to the fairness and clarity of procedures for de-listing. Once again, we take the opportunity to highlight the active role of the Ombudsperson, Judge Kimberley Prost, in achieving these goals in conformity with her mandate. In our view, the possibility of introducing this positive step in the framework of other United Nations sanctions regimes merits further active consideration.

More has to be done, and in a more effective manner, by the United Nations, including this Council,

to enhance the preventive agenda of global efforts to counter terrorism. The United Nations retains wide range of structures, both at Headquarters and in the field, that in our view could be used in this area in a more coordinated and interactive way.

We welcome all the organizational and operational measures taken so far, but we encourage further adjustments that could strengthen the interaction of all the United Nations bodies engaged, directly or indirectly, in preventive counter-terrorism efforts. Among these measures, and as stated in several occasions in the past, we are of the view that United Nations political missions and political offices in the field, which are particularly well placed to assess the risks of terrorism and forms of violent extremism, should be given the mandates and resources necessary to allow them to advise and assist on appropriate preventive efforts. They should function as a link between the field and the relevant counter-terrorism structures at Headquarters, such as the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, among others. We stand ready to engage in further thinking on how to enhance the role and capacities of United Nations missions and offices in strengthening this preventive aspect of counter-terrorism.

As with many other international threats, prevention is key to our medium- and our long-term success in fighting terrorism.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as President of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Terrorism is a serious threat to international peace and security and to the enjoyment of human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy, political independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and the social and economic development of all Member States. Azerbaijan strongly condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. We consider that all terrorist acts constitute serious crimes and must be condemned and prosecuted. Terrorists must never be allowed to try to establish a pretext for their actions. All terrorist acts are unjustifiable regardless of their motivation.

Terrorism has a changing nature and character. In many instances, it is inseparably linked to aggressive separatism, extremism and organized crime. Areas affected by armed conflict — especially territories under foreign military occupation — create conditions conducive to networking between terrorists and those acting in such territories.

Azerbaijan has been affected by terrorism in several ways, including as the direct target of externally sponsored terrorist activity. The Republic of Armenia committed dozens of terrorist acts against the civilian population and infrastructure of Azerbaijan, as a result of which over 2,000 Azerbaijanis have lost their lives. Armenia orchestrated those acts with the direct involvement of its security agencies through international terrorist groups. During the active phase of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Armenia widely practiced the use of terrorist acts against the civilian population, in conjunction with military aggression, to achieve ethnic cleansing. Those acts of cruelty culminated in February 1992 in the annihilation of the population of the town of Khojaly, where 613 innocent people perished, including children, women and elderly people. More than 100 women and 63 children were killed. Armenia also targeted civilians far beyond the conflict zone, by masterminding terrorist acts against public transport and critical infrastructure, such as the bomb explosions in the Baku metro in 1994 and others.

Although today we have largely been able to neutralize the terrorist threat coming from Armenia, the risk of terrorism posed by that country remains high. We still encounter statements openly made endorsing certain terrorist acts as a legitimate military tactic, including the targeting of civilian infrastructure, especially Azerbaijan's water reservoir dams and oil pipeline networks. Such attacks will definitely result in hundreds of thousands of casualties among the civilian population. Elements of international terrorist organizations have been integrated into Armenia's security and defence sector. It is appalling to see a country that claims to share European and universal values venerating operatives of international terrorist organizations as heroes, and even erecting monuments to them.

The policy of the ethnic cleansing of Azerbaijanis has resulted in the occupation of 20 per cent of the internationally recognized territory of Azerbaijan, creating more than 1 million refugees and internally displaced persons, who have been forced to leave their homes. The Security Council has adopted four resolutions demanding the withdrawal of Armenian troops from the occupied territories. Unfortunately, for

almost 20 years those resolutions have been ignored by Armenia.

The occupied territories of Azerbaijan represent a source of grave concern in terms of the linkage among terrorism, separatism, extremism and organized crime, including drug trafficking, money laundering and the illicit supply of arms to the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. In addition to the terrorist threat from Armenia, Azerbaijan continues to face the risk and threat posed by international terrorist groups. The proximity of our country to volatile regions makes the threat even more imminent for us. It is, therefore, no coincidence that Azerbaijan has been undertaking comprehensive national measures and actively contributing to international efforts to curb terrorism. Being a proponent of the indivisibility of security, Azerbaijan has been an active contributor to the international counter-terrorism coalition.

Although the international community has made remarkable achievements in countering terrorism, more should be done to prevent and combat the scourge. The absence of a clear definition of terrorism in international law hampers the efforts of the international community to bring to account not only individual terrorists and organizations but also States that promote, support or finance terrorist activities. In that regard, Azerbaijan stresses the importance of reaching agreement on a comprehensive convention on international terrorism to serve as an effective instrument to combat terrorism. Achieving agreement on a definition of terrorism and a convention on international terrorism could effectively address some outstanding issues, including the issue of getting States to refrain from organizing, financing, encouraging, providing training or otherwise directly or indirectly supporting terrorist activities.

Such an agreement should precede open and holistic discussions on the root causes of terrorism. We need to pay due attention to that issue within the ongoing international efforts, including through United Nations mechanisms, to address issues of social and economic development and education. Low levels of education, coupled with economic hardships, are factors that facilitate the work of terrorist propaganda, which is often promulgated through misinterpretations of religions.

The war on terrorism should not be used to target any particular religion or culture. Today, we are living at a time of heightened religious awareness, which in certain instances takes on exaggerated forms and sometimes is maliciously exploited to fuel conflicts on ethnic, religious or cultural grounds. In recent years, the unacceptable "Islamophobia" emerging in some countries confirms the vital necessity of joint efforts and dialogue to counter instances of defamation and misconceptions.

Azerbaijan does its best to contribute to the dialogue among civilizations. Our country hosts numerous events aimed at creating a better understanding among representatives of various religions. Azerbaijan is a multinational, multi-confessional country, where people of many nationalities and practitioners of all religions live together in peace and harmony. The multicultural dialogue we enjoy in our country can serve as an example of the peaceful coexistence of people of differing religious backgrounds. Azerbaijan is a country of tolerance, and we highly value our varied heritage and the multicultural legacy of our past. Today we are increasingly working to create a spirit of partnership and fraternity among our many nationalities and religions.

Economic development is one of the most important aspects of the fight against terrorism, promoting good governance and improving living conditions for populations. Over the last decade Azerbaijan has made great economic progress. Our country has been independent for only 20 years. But those years have been years of reform, transformation, development and progress. In less than 10 years our economy has tripled. Poverty has been reduced from nearly 50 per cent to 7 per cent. One million jobs have been created. Many social programmes are being implemented. The international financial institutions recognize what we are doing. Three major international organizations, Fitch Group, Moody's Corporation and Standard and Poor's, recently upgraded our credit rating. That is good sign of development, especially in the midst of the financial and economic crisis. Combating poverty, creating new jobs, developing solid legislation, strengthening the rule of law, battling corruption — all those help countries' development and consolidate efforts to combat terrorism.

We must all join our efforts to combat terrorism. The nature of terrorism today and its increasing connection with other threats to international peace and security require close international cooperation among

States, including through the establishment of a more coordinated, coherent and systematic United Nations approach. However, the existence of conflicts among States, foreign military occupation and aggressive separatism provide fertile ground for terrorism. The international community should, therefore, facilitate the resolution of conflicts on the basis of the generally accepted norms and principles of international law, particularly those relating to respect for territorial integrity and inviolability of the internationally recognized borders of States, and help countries restore sovereignty over their own territories.

I would like to use this opportunity to thank all the States Members of the United Nations for their support of Azerbaijan's candidacy. Last October, for the first time in our short history, Azerbaijan was elected as a non-permanent member of the Security Council. This is a big responsibility, and we are ready to assume that responsibility. Azerbaijan will defend the ideals of justice, international law and peaceful cooperation between all countries.

We have done considerable work within our region in order to bring countries together. Our initiatives are aimed at the expansion of regional cooperation in the spirit of friendship, partnership and good neighbourliness. We definitely intend to contribute much during our presence in the Security Council, and I can assure our friends in the United Nations — all Member States — that Azerbaijan will be a reliable and friendly partner to all countries. We want to expand our cooperation and partnership, and we are very grateful for this support.

Our country has had a great history, culture and traditions, but as an independent State, it has had only 20 years of experience. These recent years have been years of transformation, development and presentation to the world. The very fact that 155 countries supported our candidacy showed that we managed to present ourselves in a positive way. That demonstrates that the international community trusts us, believes in us, and is willing to confer this responsibility on us.

I can assure the Council that Azerbaijan is ready for this responsibility. We will not let down those who have trusted us, and we will do everything in order to create a more predictable, safer world for all of us.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

The Council has before it the text of a statement by the President on behalf of the Council on the subject of today's meeting. I thank Council members for their valuable contributions to the statement. In accordance with the understanding reached among the members of the Council, I shall take it that members of the Security Council agree to the statement, which will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2012/17.

It is so decided.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12:25 p.m.